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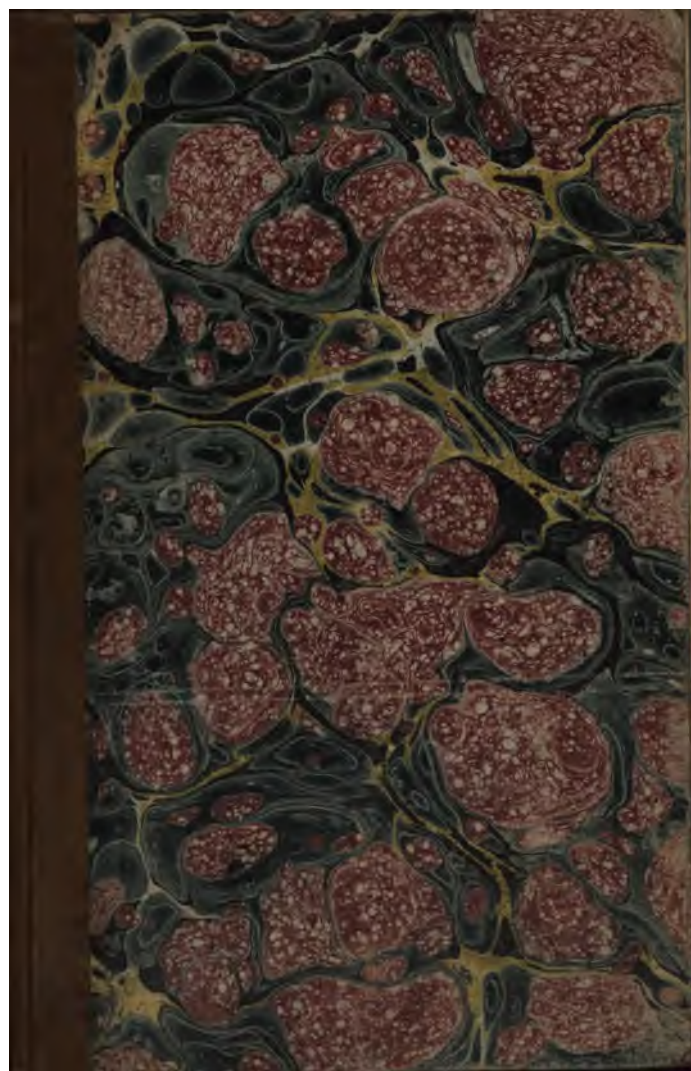
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1840.

46.





A FEW WORDS

IN BEHALF OF

THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE;

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL;

THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING THE EDUCATION
OF THE POOR IN THE PRINCIPLES OF THE
ESTABLISHED CHURCH;

THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING THE ENLARGEMENT,
BUILDING, AND REPAIRING OF CHURCHES
AND CHAPELS;

AND

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTING OF THE EMPLOYMENT
OF ADDITIONAL CURATES IN POPULOUS PLACES:

Including also

A SHORT AND POPULAR ACCOUNT
OF THE
OBJECTS AND LABOURS OF THESE SOCIETIES.

Intended principally for distribution in Country Parishes.

BY THE

REV. R. J. BUDDICOM, B.A.

CURATE OF HORLEY CUM HORNTON, OXON.

If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

OXFORD,

JOHN HENRY PARKER;

J. G. F. AND J. RIVINGTON, LONDON.

1840.
Price One Penny.

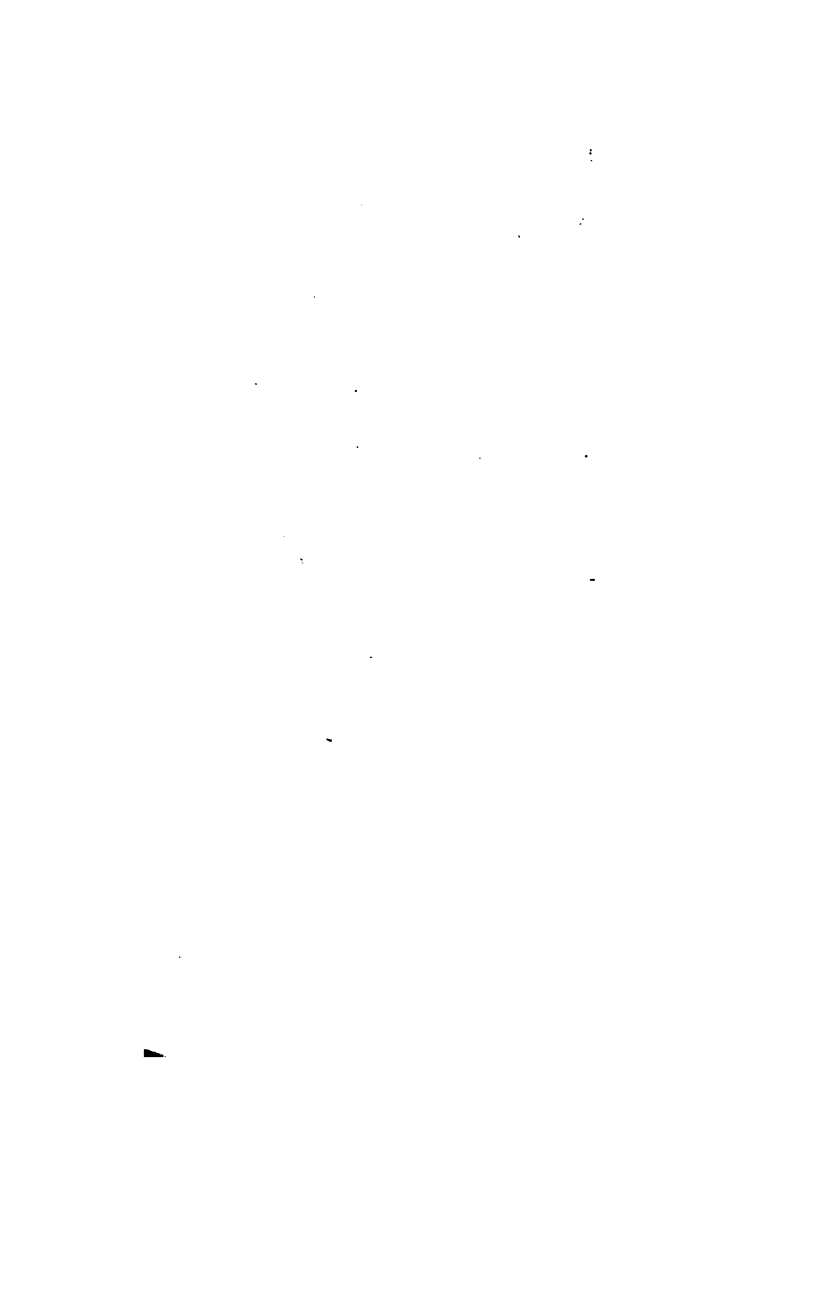
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BAXTER, PRINTER, OXFORD.

Some time after the following pages were written, their author accidentally discovered, by an advertisement in the Ecclesiastical Gazette, that he had been anticipated in more quarters than one in his plan of raising a fund to be divided amongst the five Societies mentioned in his Tract. His first impression was, to take no further steps in this matter himself, but avail himself of the valuable hints of those who had preceded him. Upon second thoughts however, he has decided upon printing his little Tract, partly, because it seems to contain a more detailed account of the objects and labours of these Societies than those which have as yet appeared; and partly, because on the unerring principle, "in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established," another and independent testimony to the value of these Societies may perhaps be not without its use.

Aug. 31, 1840.



A
FEW WORDS,
&c.

It is one of the great principles of Christianity, that "no man liveth to himself," but that we should all, as members of one and the same family, "bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Indeed, love and charity towards each other seem to be the marks or stamps which prove of what spirit the Christian is. "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another," was one of our Lord's last injunctions to his Apostles; and if this command be not obeyed, we cannot be said to be really the servants of that Master, whose whole business it was when on earth to do good to the souls and bodies of his servants.

From a deep conviction then, that it is the duty of every Christian to promote both the temporal and eternal interests of his fellow creatures, good men have at different times united themselves into Societies, with this end in view; as they were aware, that what several persons would despair of accom-

plishing by their own solitary and separate efforts, could, with God's help, easily be effected by their united and active exertions.

Of the benefit which can thus be gained, we have constantly examples before our eyes, in the numerous Friendly Societies established in our own neighbourhood, which have often, and will it is to be hoped still oftener, relieve many a sick and afflicted member.

But the Societies, to which your attention is more particularly called, have for their object the improvement and relief, as far as human means can go, of the souls of men ; and with this view they solicit all who know how important is the object at which they aim, to assist them in their labour of love.

Do you ask me, why I have selected the five Societies which stand on the title-page, as those in behalf of which your assistance is requested? I answer, because I firmly and conscientiously believe them to have been founded on the best principles, to be conducted upon the safest and most orthodox regulations, and to be doing all the good which their means allow them to expect.

They are all supported by the Queen, the Archbishops and Bishops, and by many such as yourselves, unknown indeed to man, but well known to that God, who has bid the left hand be ignorant of what the right hand doeth. Subscribers of every rank have come forward to help these Societies, and year after year parish associations are becoming more and more common, so that it is now thought strange if no such exertions are made.

It is from a desire, therefore, that the labours of these Societies should be understood and appreciated by the poor as well as the rich, that these few pages are written ; and it will indeed be a source of unmingled gratification to their author, if a single parish can by their perusal be prevailed upon to contribute to the funds of Institutions, which are all seeking one and the self-same end, the salvation of immortal souls.

CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

The oldest of these Associations is *The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*, which was established in the year 1698. The objects of this Society are to distribute at reduced prices Bibles, New Testaments, Common Prayer Books, and Religious Books and Tracts among the poor ; to assist in supplying Schools with works of instruction, and to aid necessitous parishes with books for Lending Libraries.

The Board recently voted £5,000 to the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church. It has also laboured to advance Christianity in the West Indies, having granted £10,000 at one vote for the religious instruction of the negroes. Some estimate

of the labours of the Society may be gained from the following statement of its issue of books in the year 1839.

Bibles and New Testaments	210,253
Common Prayer Books and Psalters	241,560
Bound Books and Tracts	2,437,333
<hr/>	
Total	2,889,146

From the year 1733, when the Society first began to report its issues of publications, to the present year, it is calculated that it has distributed nearly fifty-one millions of books.

As then the poor are the persons who are principally benefitted by the Society, so are they also the persons on whom it has perhaps the greatest claims; and unless they are willing to repay the debt they have incurred, they cannot expect to be able always to purchase books at reduced prices, or to have the benefit of Lending Libraries established in their own parishes. But if on the other hand exertions are made by the poor to shew that they are not ungrateful for what has been already done in their behalf, but are anxious to strengthen the hands which have been so liberal to them, it may be expected both that the other ends of the Society will be accomplished, and that while the reduction in the price of books may continue the same, sound religion and useful learning may be communicated by the means of the Lending Libraries, which the Society is anxious to establish.

PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL.

The next Society on our list is *The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, which was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1701 for receiving, managing, and dispensing, such funds as might be contributed for religious instruction beyond the seas, for the maintenance of Clergymen in the British Colonies, &c. and for the general Propagation of the Gospel. The services rendered by this Society to our fellow-countrymen, members of the Church in the Colonies, are very extensive, and beyond all calculation. Its income, however, has for many years been inadequate to meet the necessary expenditure, though from the great exertions which have been lately made by the Bishops, the Clergy, and many excellent lay members of the Church, there is good reason to hope that there will speedily be a great increase in the funds of this invaluable Society. "Indeed, when we remember that its object is not only to afford the means of religious worship to our fellow-countrymen abroad who are already Christians, but also to extend the blessings of Christianity to many millions of heathens, especial regard being had to those who through the Providence of God are our fellow-subjects," but from unavoidable circumstances are destitute of many spiritual advantages, it does seem that those Churchmen who do not assist this Society are indeed without excuse.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

The third Institution which is to be mentioned is *The National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church*, which was incorporated by Royal Charter in the year 1817, having like the last-mentioned Institution sprung from *The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*. It has hitherto pursued the objects of its foundation, by assisting in the erection of new school rooms throughout the country, supporting a large central school in London, and establishing a connection with schools in other places.

It has granted from its own funds the sum of £120,659 towards building new schools in 1553 places, and has trained at its central school 2,695 teachers. There are now 6,778 schools united to the Society; these contain 597,911 children; while the total number of schools for the instruction of the poor in Church principles is stated to be 17,341, there being in these 1,002,087 scholars. Now without any disparagement to her four sisters, the claims of the National Society seem to be irresistible, and even on the low ground of self-interest and expediency, such as cannot be gainsayed. To parents this Society appeals, and beseeches them to aid her in her endeavours to train up their children in the way they should go, so that remembering their Creator in the days of their youth, they may be the more ready when they come to riper years

to remember also that Creator's command, "to honour their father and mother."

She tells them, that it is her object, now that Chartism and Socialism with its blasphemies and impurities are rearing their head in the land, to pre-occupy the ground of their children's heart, and sow it with the good seed, which is the Word of God.

The former she puts in mind of the frequent and barbarous act of incendiarism, and the general outcry which is now being made against those laws by which hitherto he has been protected and encouraged; and therefore she confidently looks for at his hand such pecuniary aid, as may enable her to procure for him honest labourers, sober servants, and steady supporters of their masters' cause, those masters who with their labourers are the pride and support of their country.

The Clergyman she invites to assist her in this good work, by expressly stating, that she educates the children of his parish in the principles of that Church of which he is a Minister, leaving the superintendence and management of the school entirely to himself, and that she thus provides him with an intelligent, affectionate, and quiet congregation.

CHURCH BUILDING.

But since Schools are only the handmaids of the Church, and as we should consider the instruction which our children receive incomplete indeed were public worship to be excluded from our system of education, care must be taken that there be a supply of Churches equal at least to the increase of Schools. Accordingly in 1818, *The Society for Promoting the Enlargement, Building, and Repairing, of Churches and Chapels* was incorporated.

This Society, since its formation in 1818 to the 31st of March 1840, has assisted in providing additional Church Room for 487,536 persons, of which number the free and unappropriated sittings for the use of the poor are for 341,316.

2,482 Parishes have already applied for aid, and this number is increasing.

1,606 of these have been enabled by its help to effect their objects.

The Society has expended for the increase of Church accommodation, £287,613.

It has thus been the means of causing a further expenditure for the same purpose of £1,500,000.

During the last year it has expended £24,997.

And now its Funds are nearly exhausted.

Alas! that it should be confessed, that a Society which has for its aim the building and repairing of the houses of the Most High, is in any difficulties, or prevented from accomplishing what every Christian ought to desire from his soul!

There are thousands and tens of thousands of our countrymen who cannot, even if they are willing,

worship God in the great congregation, because there is no place or accommodation for them.

Thousands and tens of thousands have left the Church of England solely because there has never been any Church which they could call their own, and no Minister whom they have been taught to look up to as their own peculiar pastor.

Can we then with any truth call ourselves Christians, much less members of the Church of England, if we refuse any longer either to lend a hand to rescue those who do not observe the Sabbath-day to keep it holy from their perilous condition, or hesitate to recal wandering sheep to that fold, which from our hearts we believe to be the safest and most secure?

How many Churches are there fast falling into ruin, and how many now inadequate to the increased population, which this Society would gladly assist to restore and enlarge, had it only the necessary means, and were the inhabitants of those Parishes desirous of assisting themselves.

In fact, as for every other act of love and charity, so especially for their support of this Society, will the good and charitable receive their reward, as well in this life as in that which is to come. For if liberal assistance be but granted to the Society, its powers of doing good will be much increased, and many needy and necessitous Parishes assisted to repair and restore Churches, which otherwise would lie in ruin and neglect. So true is the saying, "he that watereth, shall be watered also himself."

ADDITIONAL CURATES.

The fifth and last of these Societies is intimately connected with the preceding. For since there have been many Churches already built of late years, and many more as we trust about to be built, it must follow, that the service of many more Clergymen will be required in every direction. With this view a Society has been established, *for the Promoting of the Employment of Additional Curates in populous places*, and thus to increase the means of pastoral instruction and superintendence at present possessed by the Church; and in order thereto, to provide a fund for the maintenance of additional Clergymen to be employed as Licensed Curates, where their services are most required in England and Wales. Two hundred and thirty-six Incumbents have already applied for aid through their respective Diocesans; and of these, one hundred and one are now enabled, by the help of the Society's grants, to establish additional services, and to obtain additional Curates in their several parishes and districts, comprising an aggregate population of more than a million and three quarters. In addition to which, a sum of £2,600, remaining in the Society's hands, in consequence of grants not becoming payable, has been apportioned to eleven parishes in the shape of annual assistance to each for three years, when that sum will be exhausted.

So important are the objects of this Society, and so useless will be the increase of Churches without additional Clergymen, that it seems superfluous to offer any arguments in support of its claims. One point, however, deserves particular attention.

In many of our large towns, the Parishes are so immensely populous, that the Clergyman is compelled to devote his whole time to the public services of the Church, to the necessary neglect of the sick and infirm of his flock. The benefices moreover are so small, that he cannot afford to have a Curate to assist him; and thus many sink into the grave without that attention and advice on his part, which he longs but is unable to pay.

With the offices of Baptism, of Matrimony, and the Burial of the Dead, he is well acquainted, but to the office of the Visitation of the Sick he must comparatively be a stranger.

And yet is there any one who has ever heard that simple and holy Service read by his Minister at his own sick bed, who has not felt comfort and relief, and would not therefore gladly afford to others the same consolation which he has himself received?

It would be an easy and pleasant task to enumerate more of the claims which these Societies have upon us all, but such an occupation would it is hoped be as unnecessary as it would exceed the limits to which we have confined ourselves. A brief sketch has been given of the objects and proceedings of the five Societies in behalf of which you are invited to exert yourselves, and contribute whatever sums you can afford, to be equally distributed amongst them. And surely nothing more is required to open the hearts of every true Churchman than this imperfect statement, which explains some of the benefits these Societies have accomplished, and the reasons also why these benefits are so much smaller than they feel they could effect.

It cannot be too much to expect, ~~that~~ ^{that} are now acquainted for the first time ~~with~~ ^{with} and labours of these Institutions, should ~~con~~ ^{con} at their previous ignorance of these matt~~er~~ ^{er} active exertions in their behalf, endeavour for lost time. The manner of collecting ~~co~~ ^{co} may be a subject for future arrangements, ~~u~~ ^u haps no single definite plan can be suggest~~ed~~ ^{ed} meet the circumstances of every Parish. Still is but a minor consideration; and if the duty o~~f~~ ^f contributing to these Institutions be only allowed, ~~a~~ ^a thing else will follow in its proper order. If b~~y~~ ^y small sum were contributed by every family in ~~a~~ ^a munion with the Established Church, a measur~~e~~ ^e good almost beyond calculation would hum~~an~~ ^{an} speaking be accomplished. The same amount is expected from every person, but some acknowl~~ed~~ ^{ed} ment of the mighty debt we owe to our Savio~~r~~ ^r sought for at the hands of all. The poor is in ~~a~~ ^a asked to give out of his poverty, and the rich o~~f~~ ^f his abundance.

God loveth a cheerful giver: let us therefore give liberally, remembering that he who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord, and that he whose heart is filled with love, is filled with the only posses~~s~~ ^s which will never perish, but remain for eve~~r~~ ^r heaven.

“Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three but the greatest of these is charity.”

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